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ABSTRACT

The focus of this paper is on examination of the processes, elements, and attitudes required to meet educational policy needs in conditions of declining enrollment. Public education is going through a period of change that is derived from forces in the larger society, rather than from within the educational system. Educators must become involved in the politics of educational policy-making and in the broader activities of state government if effective planning is to take place. The Minnesota State Planning Agency, which is charged with coordinating planning and with identifying educational and demographic trends, is presented as one type of response to the pressure for orderly change. The author also points out the need for policy research that focuses on real world problems and for statesmanlike leadership in education.
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THE EDUCATIONAL POLICY SETTING AND FLUCTUATING SCHOOL ENROLLMENTS

A Paper Presented at a Symposium on Fluctuating Enrollments: Implications for Manpower Planning and Resource Allocation, Session 13.14, 1977 Annual Meeting, American Educational Research Association, New York City, April 6, 1977.

by

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THE EDUCATIONAL POLICY SETTING AND FLUCTUATING SCHOOL ENROLLMENTS

Van D. Mueller

I. Introduction

This paper is intended to serve as a descriptive appraisal of the educational policy setting and fluctuating school enrollments. The continuous interaction of the education system with its internal and external environments and with demographic, economic, legal, political and psychological factors will be considered. Current policy efforts to respond to enrollment declines will be described. Distinction will be drawn between policy research and discipline research. The potential effectiveness of alternative types of planning will be briefly sketched and the possible advantages of integrating the planning and political activities of those planning "for" and "in" education will be considered.

Public elementary and secondary education is in an unusual period of change. In the 1960's there was created a sense of potential change in the areas of curriculum and instruction. This sense and its excitement was based on the influx of new monies and new demands being placed upon the schools from the science/space race and emerging human rights concerns. In the early years of the 1970's, the demands for change shifted to the public policy areas of structure, organization and finance. The change in emphasis is in response to new demands for equity and the situation of declining enrollments in elementary and secondary schools.

Perhaps the most recurring statements by speakers and writers of the day reflect efforts to come to grips with the profound shock of declining enrollments. Fundamental efforts are needed to understand and manage decline and to simultaneously rebuild and strengthen institutions of educational policy-setting and governance. Kenneth Boulding indicates that large adjustments will have to be made in our ways of thinking, in our habits and standards of decision-making, and perhaps even in our institutions. He suggests the need for a new generation of administrators who are skilled in the process of adjusting to decline.[1] Davis and Lewis state that while the need for changes in curriculum, pedagogy, and the mode and site for delivery of services are traceable from demographic analysis, the form of educational response is not. They caution educators against forming mind-sets for either growth or decline.[2] In a companion article Nyquist suggests that the management of decline is synonymous with "decremental planning" and the gains of the past need not be lost if educators will use this planning focus.[3] Kirst advocates a response to decline based on improved representation in policy making through a combination of enhanced legislative governance and school site decision-making structures. He argues that the most flexible, adaptable school system for future conditions requires significant change in educational governance.[4]

The whole of the traditional structure is now in need of reappraisal. Educators are currently faced with complex and increasingly severe problems brought about in part by the profound shock of change from a growth psychology to one of decline and program contraction. The purpose of this paper is not to describe the change which is occurring, particularly the statistics. The numbers are all too well known. The paper will address some of the implications of these changes and the opportunities which they present for

improving educational policy making. Additional implications will be presented concerning changing relationships between local school districts and various state agencies, state departments of education, state planning agencies, legislatures and governors' offices. The need for a new accomodation among competing values and objectives in the areas of planning, participation, and politics will be emphasized.

II. What is Educational Policy-Making?

There is, as yet, no general model or set of models which describe or explain the major components of educational policy-making. Davis describes how the skills and knowledges of numerous desciplines; i.e. psychology, economics, political science, sociology, etc. are involved in educational planning and policy-making.[5] Coleman argues that there is no body of methods, no comprehensive methodology, for the study of the impact of public policy as an aid to future policy.[6]

Numerous definitions and conceptualizations of the terms policy and policy-making can be found in the literature. In order to establish some boundaries for the discussions of policy and planning in this paper Johnsons[7] definitions are accepted. He sets forth a conceptual definition of educational policy formation and educational policy drawn from the work of Bauer[8], Ballinger[9], Selznick[10], and Simon.[11] Educational policy is defined as:

> "guidelines (narrow, or broad, rigid or flexible) for the guidance or determination of a class of decisions and/or actions"

Policy is the outcome of an institutional process usually labeled policy-making or policy formulation. Johnson defines policy formation as an interactive process including goal setting, evaluation of situations to be

met, selection of a course of action, and implementation. He assumes that policy formation represents a systematic, conscious, purposeful effort to influence the future. This model represents a very rational approach to policy-making which probably requires the tempering of the political process to move it closer to reality. Since planning can also be defined as a systematic attempt to shape the future it becomes policy-making when it becomes a prelude to action. What then is the environment or condition in which this action takes place?

III. The Educational Policy Setting

Educational policy-making in the United States has been, and is, exceedingly diffused, pluralistic, and decentralized. The focus of this paper is on the state and local government portion of this complex policy system and those actions, instruments and behaviors most likely to effect a general improvement in responding to the policy implications of enrollment decline exclusive of federal activity. The following paragraphs will describe briefly the educational policy setting in terms of its demographic context, its relationship to state planning efforts, the nature of planning and policy research and the demand for increased participation and political involvement.

A. Demographic Context. Morrison concludes that population issues--growth, stability or decline lack the single frightening event--war, riot, or natural disaster that galvanizes attention and public action. Further, that demographic change, slow to develop, diffused and long-lived may be compared to a glacier proceeding slowly but on a massive scale. The pressures of change mount steadily and may go unnoticed until the impact of the maturing trend suddenly becomes evident in numerous places nationwide.

At that point the sheer scale of the issue tends to divert the "system" from effective action.[12] Morrison also argues that educational planners and policy-makers are not receiving the full benefit of demographic analysis and that population statistics are not understood and are poorly used by those who make educational policy decisions.

B. Educational Planning and State Planning Agencies. Historically state level educational policy making has taken place outside or separate from other state policy activity. This separation was made to insure, supposedly, that educational policy decisions were non-political or "above politics." Educational goals have been defined, resources allocated and programs implemented without a systematic examination of their relationship with other state policy goals or activities. During the late 1960's and early 1970's governors and legislatures began to develop an improved capacity for policy analysis, problem-solving and planning. The establishment of the Minnesota State Planning Agency in 1967 and its position in the executive branch of state government is an example of a response common to many states. The expansion of research staffs in the legislative branch of the state governments represents an additional policy analysis and planning capacity.[13] How does educational goal setting, planning and financing relate to other goals of state government? An example, applicable to many states relates to state fiscal policy. In order to achieve changes in the equity of tax structures (property tax relief) state legislatures have placed levy limitations upon local units of government, including school districts. State planning agencies increasingly have performed a coordinative function among various state agencies, assisting in planning, creating central data banks and evaluating alternative planning decisions as they relate to overall

state policy goals. In this policy setting the educational system is perceived as a resource to be used for the solution of problems and for attaining state and community goals. Education is not viewed as an activity to be developed solely for its own ends.

Jennings provides a useful description of the context in which educational policy-making takes place by differentiating between planning for education and planning in education. He describes the inter-face between planning for education and planning in education as the place at which planning and politics meet.[14] If this view is accepted educators have two choices: (1) to simply accept the established policy goals as defined in the political process and assume a "guardian" role for education, or (2) to move vigorously to become participants (statesmen) in the policy-making and comprehensive planning activities of the state. A dilemma occurs when educators or education "advocates" are too narrowly focused in their policy concerns and therefore lose credibility in the wider policy arena. The fundamental question may be: How do we make statesmen?

The difficulties which educators face in this changing educational policy-making setting at the state level are many and are a direct legacy of the old style closed-system of educational politics. Some examples are:

1. Educators have rarely had to respond to the question: What should you be doing? In the past educators worked toward a priori goals set by educators and lobbied to obtain financial support. The goals were vague and few efforts were made to measure outcomes against goals;
2. Educators have not been accustomed to political direction from the executive branch of state government. In the past educators assiduously promoted the myth that education is separate from (or "above") politics;

3. Educators have never really had to articulate with other areas of public endeavor (at least not since the separation of schools from general government at the turn of the century). The emphasis in the closed system of educational politics has been to gain protection for the resources needed by education; and
4. Educators have not had their efforts subjected to close outside scrutiny. Educators have set the policy goals for the system and evaluated outcomes according to measures devised by educators.

The result of this condition has been that education policy-makers are defensive about their activities:

1. Where planning in education fails to meet the expectations held by those planning for education, educators complain that politics has jeopardized their planning efforts;
2. Where and when education fails to articulate with other community and state efforts, educators reply that education is a separate and special function; and
3. Where education is subjected to outside evaluation, educators object to the yardsticks used.

These defenses are not likely to last long in the face of rapidly developing legislative and state agency analytical capabilities and increased gubernatorial authority. The recent comparative study by Campbell and Mazzoni discusses the changing composition of the major participants in state educational policy-making.[15] It would seem that educators must expand their policy concerns and efforts beyond a narrow education focus

if they wish to influence educational policy-making, even with the concomitant risks which this change would entail. This would suggest rejection of the "guardian" role in favor of the "stateman" role.

C. The Nature of Planning and Policy Research. The idea of comprehensive state planning for education and social policy is relatively new. Most of the broad scale planning activity has centered on physical or land-use planning at the municipal or country levels. Planning for demographic changes entails making difficult choices of emphasis between often conflicting objectives. This results from the policy outcomes which distribute costs and benefits unevenly among groups of people and jurisdictions. For example a school district with declining enrollment must make decisions to:

1. reduce staff or increase the pupil-teacher ratio;
2. close school buildings as an economy measure or keep them open as a convenience to the community; and
3. submit to decline or seek new ways to use facilities and faculties (adult or early childhood programs).

Morrison points out that technical analysis can identify choices and evaluate the consequences of each but it cannot presume to make the final choices because these are matters of value (political), not technical solution.[15] According to Kirst it is unlikely that better administrative analysis (technical skills) or improved interpersonal implementation (human skills) can make much of a difference in a declining industry. Problems may not have solutions and the degrees of freedom to implement changes may not exist in a condition of scarce resources. Problems may

persist for reasons that have nothing to do with administration.[17] Coleman argues that there is no body of methods, no comprehensive methodology, for the study of the impact of public policy as an aid for future policy. Arron suggests that "..... the most important question policy makers must address is not how to extract the "truth" from the research social scientists have provided, but rather how to formulate policy in recognition that analysts have given them almost nothing to go on." He states further that "educators must take the 'winning line' approach (toward educational policy); they must act as if such resources were useful, and they can do so because the quality of most existing research is so poor and the issues are so very complex."[20]

What then are the alternatives? Depending upon its institutional capability for choice, society (and educational policy-makers) can adapt to demographic changes, according to Morrison,[21] in any of three basic ways, or in some combination of them:

1. The simplest mode is reactive problem solving. Do nothing about a problem until it comes up. This means narrowing options;
2. The second adaptation is trend modification. This is a future-oriented version of the previous mode. Present trends are projected, future problems and needs are foreseen, and suggested social policies and mechanisms are devised which avoid or ease the predicted future problems; and
3. The third mode is goal oriented planning. This approach entails deciding on desired future goals

> and implementing policies to "guide" the system toward them. It assumes society's ability and willingness to achieve closure on means and ends and is probably neither desirable or feasible in our type of democratic, individualistic system. An acceptance of "organized anarchy" might well be a prerequisite to this mode.

D. Participation and Politics. Perhaps one reason we mesmerize ourselves with visions of the distant future is that it is not easy to introduce flexibility into large institutions nor to generate support for policy changes which might impact problems in the making. The natural tendency is to do nothing about a problem until it has reached full-blown status. This means narrowing the policy options drastically by continually reacting to the ends of the process instead of their beginnings. At this point the sheer scale of the issue diverts the system from effective action. For example, trying to deal with a teacher surplus after a decade of preparing teachers in the face of a projected decline in school enrollments.

Thomas and Larson suggest that the history of American education clearly shows that the impetus for change in educational policy is more likely to derive from forces in the wider society than from forces within the educational system itself. Changes in the "national will" will determine whether the educational policymaker is able to define and lead programs for change with massive public support, or, whether he must develop a more managerial role, trying to accomodate to changing circumstances without a political mandate and without appreciable financial or moral support.[22]

Kaufman describes the structure of school governance as a search for accomodation among three competing values: representativeness; technical, non-partisan competence; and leadership.[23] At various stages of development of the educational system one value has received more emphasis than the others because new conditions required new policies and excessive empahsis on one of the values tends to demand redress of the balance. Kirst's analysis of contemporary educational governance leads toward recommendations for improved representation through enhanced legislative governance and new school-site decision-making structures. This focus on increased participation would provide the most flexible, adaptable mechanism to cope with future conditions.[24] The evaluation of new state and local structures and functions for policymaking, with increased participation in the determination of what education should do may enlarge the opportunities for educators to exert their leadership in the mix of politics and planning.

IV. Implications

The preceding sections of this paper have attempted to describe the "setting" or context in which policies responding to school enrollment fluctuations are taking place. This final section focuses on responses to the problem by the Minnesota State Planning Agency, the need for leadership skilled in the adjustment to decline, policy research needs to support needed changes, and issues or problems in implementing policy changes.

A. Minnesota State Planning Agency Responses. Educational policymaking, planning, and problem-solving in Minnesota has often proceeded in ignorance of what is already known about the consequences of population shifts. The responses of the education system to the "baby boom" and recently to the

"baby bust" are symptomatic of a gap between policy and knowledge. The Minnesota State Planning Agency as a staff agency to the Governor has a general responsibility for horizon scanning and trend modification activity. As the pressures of demographic change mounted the State Planning Agency began to raise questions about the effectiveness of the "system" responses:

1. How is the State Department of Education responding? Assuming it has leadership, assistance and guidance responsibilities. Answer: very little effective action.
2. How are individual school districts responding? Answer: mostly reactive problem solving, avoidance and blaming state government.
3. What are the 2-10 year fiscal implications of declining enrollments on the state and on local units of government (not just school districts)? Answer: no estimates available.
4. What are the 2-10 year implications of enrollment declines on student access to programs and services (particularly in low density, sparsely populated rural areas)? Answer: no estimates available.
5. What do overall age structure changes mean to the total state education and human services programs? Change in demand, focus, resource availability and allocation? Answer: no estimates available.

The context within which these questions were posed reflected a state planning agency desire to (1) provide a capacity for the Governor's office to identify educational and demographic trends and their implications for

overall state government; (2) improve planning and management in the State Department of Education; (3) maintain and strengthen small communities; and (4) maintain the Minnesota populist tradition of strong local units of government.

In addition to raising questions, the Minnesota State Planning Agency has taken numerous actions to bring education policy-making and planning and state-policy-making and planning closer together. Examples of these activities are:

1. Initiatives were taken with the State Department of Education to disseminate enrollment data generated by the State Planning Agency;
2. The Planning Assistance Manual for Managing School Districts with Declining Enrollments[25] and accompanying case studies were developed by SPA to assist and stimulate local districts in planning, and to provide the SDE with additional tools for providing technical assistance to local schools;
3. SPA assisted in the planning and development and supported legislative actions that resulted in the enactment of two new management systems: (a) Uniform Financial Accounting and Reporting Systems (UFARS) and (b) Planning, Evaluating and Reporting System (PERS). These actions could be viewed as attempts at trend modification;
4. Analyses were initiated by SPA in education and human services to understand fundamental age structure changes and their impact on school enrollments;

5. Analyses were begun of educational services in rural Minnesota including the exploration of alternative structures for delivering educational programs and services. In this area SPA developed a policy paper and supported the establishment of the Educational Cooperative Service Units (ECSU's);
6. SPA initiated analyses to examine the interactions between employment, tax revenues, changing human service demands, costs to the state, and possible reallocations over time. It was assumed that the need for reallocations between human services several years from now might require statutory changes now and also might require efforts now to establish expectations that reallocations will really happen;
7. Exploratory studies in enrollment trends continue under the auspices of the state demographer. A detailed study of population migration and its impact at the school district level has just been completed; and
8. A day and a half seminar on the fiscal implications of enrollment decline sponsored by SPA for the full membership of legislative education committees and research staff.

These actions represented attempts to include education in the state's total policy and planning scheme by relating the planning for education with the planning in education and thereby increasing the political viability of educational planning at the state and local levels. An annotated biblio-

graphy is included in this paper and provides a summary listing of those actions which were published for dissemination purposes.

B. Leadership Needs. The implementation of new directions for leaders in the educational system demands a new attitude toward politics, planning and participation. The phenomenon of declining or fluctuating school enrollments could provide the basis for a new, creative restructuring of elementary and secondary education or result in bureaucratic entrenchment, stultification and plain ineptness.

Some specific directions leading toward a new attitude are:

1. School administrators must become familiar with broad policy making on the state level and the variety of demands on state government;
2. School administrators must look to the community to rebuild confidence, trust and support for public education. Collaborative efforts need to be initiated to stretch scarce resources;
3. School administrators must become involved in planning for education;
4. School administrators should lead the discussion of educational goals and objectives within the wider view of education as a state and community resource;
5. School administrators should lead in reducing the "special interest" lobbying by educators through emphasis on goal-setting for broad priorities; and
6. School administrators should lead in promoting the joint evaluation of educational plans, policies and programs by state and local officals.

Present day educational administrators have grown up in a period of rapid growth and presumably were capable of dealing with it. Even though we know very little about the process of decline and its implications for policy-making and management it seems evident that the creative management of decline will demand both new attitudes and new skills.

C. Policy Research Needs. Declining school enrollments have and will continue to frustrate educational reform in several ways. To begin with, they automatically force an increase in unit costs, and tend to promote discussion of highly sensitive issues such as teacher layoffs and school consolidation. Additionally, they automatically inflate the fiscal ability of local school districts in all states using pupil counts as a basis for judging local school district wealth. Thus, without adjustment, they result in a reduction in state aid since every state distributes some portion of its school aid inversely to local wealth. Accordingly, strong pressures emerge to hold the affected districts harmless from cuts in aid, pressures which may not only affect school productivity and fiscal equity but also increase the total price of education.

According to Coleman[26] very little of the currently funded research fits either a pattern of discipline research (contributes to theory) or policy research (addresses a problem involving potential policy actions). Coleman suggests that the largest portion of research in the social sciences arises from an unfortunate complementarity of motives: officials in operative agencies without real power to formulate policy, but happy that they can "fund research"; and researchers, pleased to be working on relevant problems, but without the responsibility of addressing any problems involving potential policy actions, and with funds which may enable them to enhance their prestige in their discipline.

This unhealthy situation is likely to persist until those responsible for formulating specific policy questions include both those individuals that have a need for the research results and those researchers who subscribe to the need to bring disciplinary knowledge and skills to matters of interest to the real world outside the discipline. The education policy setting with its multiple complexities in demography, economics, political science, psychology, law and sociology could certainly benefit from the tools of social science research appropriately addressed to problems of coping with decline.

D. Implementation of Policy Changes. Much of this paper has focused on politics and policymaking. It is possible that we may become so absorbed in the process of policy determination that we ignore the final consequences. Hargrove points out that implementation can refer to two different but interrelated processes. One process would be to ask the question: What will the consequences be of organizing the program according to strategy and plan x rather than plan y? A second process would ask: How do we carry out the strategy and plan we have chosen? This distinction is important and germane to the discussion of the policy setting because the two processes take place at different times and engage the attention of different actors. The process of setting the strategy for implementation overlaps in time with the policy decision process, is usually shaped by that activity and is given specific attention by those involved in making policy. The matter of execution and administration of a program once designed is usually of less priority to policy makers and is given over to management.[27]

Since arguments have been made earlier in this paper for substantially greater involvement in general policymaking by educators it seemed appro-

priate to at least call attention to the need for mutual understanding, close articulation, and even collaborative efforts between those in several different roles in the policy process. Politician, administrator, and researcher must develop a new level of accomodation if more effective roles are to emerge for each and if new policy research is to be conducted to focus on the management of decline. While we certainly must have research knowledge to apply, its design must speak to policy and program problems. Once policy decisions are made, orderly execution of plans must be completed. Implementation responsibilities join policy research and policy making as important facets of the policy setting.

V. In Summary

The focus of this paper has been on examining the process, elements and attitudes required to respond to educational policymaking in conditions of enrollment decline and program contraction. It has been suggested that public education is in an unusual period of change and that the impetus for change will continue to be derived from forces in the larger society rather than within the educational system. It was stated that continued conflict is likely between the political designs for education and changing demographic factors, the economy, over-supply of teachers and pressures for expanded representation in educational governance.

The educational policy setting was described as being remarkably diffuse, pluralistic and decentralized. The difficulty of gaining public understanding of demographic changes was noted with the subsequent difficulties of instituting changes in policy to alleviate and respond to phenomena such as declining school enrollments. Increased activity by legislative staff, gubernatorial staff and state planning agency staffs in

areas heretofore reserved to state education agency and educator policy action was illustrated. The need for educator involvement in the politics of educational policymaking and in the broader activity of state government was stressed.

The need for models or systems to provide focus and direction to educational planning and policymaking was stated. The natural tendency to do nothing about a problem until it has reached crisis stage may be an untenable position by education in the face of declining clientle and a reduced demand for programs and services.

The response of the Minnesota State Planning Agency was outlined. Through both direct and indirect interventions, a variety of responses have been initiated in order to stimulate the education system to respond to pressures for change. Some differences in opinions exist in regard to the potential effectiveness or need for new technical skills and/or attitudes with which to cope with the management of decline. Several specific directions were noted which might have some impact on the process and product of school administration.

Finally the need for appropriate policy research and greater attention to the changing requirements for policy implementation were discussed. There is great need for better articulation between the consumers of policy research--the policymakers and the producers of this research. The role of educators in this process will be dependent to a considerable degree on their acceptance of a role (and responsibility) in policymaking and politics and in their willingness to focus research skills and methodologies on real world problems. The most compelling current need for policy research and for new levels of commitment to the policy process are found in the complexities of change from growth to decline in the education system.

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27. Erwin C. Hargrove, The Missing Link--The Study of the Implementation of Social Policy. (Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute, July 1975) pp. 1-15.

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MINNESOTA STATE PLANNING AGENCY EDUCATION POLICY-RELATED MATERIALS:

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   a. An Analysis of Public School Enrollments in Minnesota 1970-74, June 1975, 526 p.

      Comprehensive analysis of public school enrollment trends, birth rates, migration patterns. Includes state, county, and regional summaries as well as a district-by-district analysis.

   b. Minnesota Population Projections 1970-2000, 199 p., November 1975.

      In compliance with Minnesota statutes population projections are made and assessed annually. Data is presented by county and region and include assumptions on which projections are based.

   c. Faces of the Future, January 1977, 36 p.

      A review of the impact of demographic changes on the educational system, labor force, transportation system, criminal justice and other human service programs.

2. Human Resources Planning:

   a. Managing School Districts with Declining Enrollments--Planning Assistance Manual, July 1976, 79 p.

      Emphasizes basic tools for collecting, organizing, and presenting information for school district planning. Includes sections on enrollment forecasting, budgets, staffing, facilities, school closing, and community involvement.

   b. Managing School Districts with Declining Enrollment--Case Study
      #1 "A Metropolitan Suburban Community", 31 p., April 1976
      #2 "A Small City", 32 p., April 1976
      #3 "A Complete Agricultural Service Center", 25 p., April 1976
      #4 "A complete Non-Agricultural Service Center", 27 p., April 1976
      #5 "A Local Village", 25 p., April 1976

      The five case studies illustrate what is happening in declining enrollment school districts. They are intended to provide background for individuals interested in over-all state education policy.

   c. Alternatives for Lifelong Learning in Minnesota: The Nonformal Education Sector, December 1976, 40 p.

      Describes the major educational networks providing nonformal education, the nature and extent of programs offered, faculty and student characteristics, target populations, and revenue sources.

d. Needs Assessment: A Guide for Human Services, January 1977. 25 p.

Examination of ways of assessing client and community needs with emphasis on rational techniques for resource allocation.

e. Minnesota Educational Seminar Policy Papers, September 1974
"An Analysis of Expenditures Per Pupil Unit and Other School District Characteristics", 10 p.
"Policy Issues Surrounding the Educational Services Area Concept in the State of Minnesota", 46 p.
"Changing Expectations: Minnesota's Response Through Educational Programs and Needs Assessment", 28 p.

Exploration of three policy areas of current interest to Minnesota policy-makers. Emphasis on clarification of major policy questions within each area.

f. State Finance Policy Studies
#1a "A Descriptive Study of Salaries from 1969-70 Through 1975-76", 36 p., December 1976
#1b "A Descriptive Study of Expenditures, 1969-70 Through 1975-76", 50 p., December 1976
#4 "A Descriptive Study of Revenues by Source, 1969-70 to 1975-76", 26 p., December 1976
#6 "The Use of Referendum Procedures to Exceed Maintenance Levy Limitations 1971-76", 16 p., November 1976
#7 "Educational Service Capability--1969-70 Through 1975-76", March 1977
#11 "An Analysis of Trends in State Aid Distribution to Minnesota School Districts: Categorical V. General", 11 p., December 1976
#12 "An Analysis of Employment Status Changes in Minnesota Public Elementary and Secondary Schools Professional Staff, 1973-74, 1974-75, 1975-76", 19 p., November 1976
#13 "An Analysis of the Status and Trends in Minnesota Non-Public Elementary and Secondary Schools", 22 p., January 1977
#14 "Trends in Actual and Total Pupil Units and Net Enrollments in Minnesota School Districts 1964-65 Through 1978-79", 10 p., January 1977
#15 "An Analysis of Adjusted Assessed Property Values (EARC) by County, Region and State For the Period 1970 Through 1975", 40 p., January 1977.

The studies provide basic trend information needed for a fundamental understanding of school financing, organization and programming for Minnesota public schools. Policy issues are identified in the several areas, no recommendations are made.

g. Major Forces Affecting Public Elementary and Secondary Education in Minnesota, 4 p., August 1973

A report to the governor and state commissioner of education based on a study of forces affecting public education in Minnesota. Provides structure for discussion and clarification of policy issues.

3. Commission on Minnesota's Future:

a. Minnesota Horizons, 100 p., January 1975

Designed as a special briefing for the legislature on trends and developments in health care, transportation, environmental protection, the economy, energy, education, population distribution, human services needs, and Minnesota government. Focus is directed at the multiplicity of complex, interrelated issues and problems.

b. Minnesota Horizons II, January 1977

An updated legislative briefing on the broad range of critical issues facing Minnesota government. Emphasis is directed at the impact of population change.

c. Report of the Commission on Minnesota's Future, 83 p., January 1977

Sets forth goals, objectives and strategies for state action drawn from a study of issues confronting Minnesota. Includes conclusions and recommendations on state policy in all major public service areas including education.

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON FLUCTUATING SCHOOL ENROLLMENTS:

1. A Preliminary Report to the Minnesota State Legislature: The Impact of Fluctuating School Enrollments on Minnesota's Educational System, 123 p., January 1976

Analysis of the effects of fluctuating enrollments on the cost and quality of education. Includes statewide enrollment projections and assumptions of which they are based.

2. The Impact of Fluctuating School Enrollments on Minnesota's Educational System, Volume I - 79 p. and Volume II 568 p., January 1977

Volume I includes recommendations to the legislature, state board of education and local school districts. Volume II contains supporting data, working papers and information used in the development of recommendations.